

REMARKS

New claims 23-26 have been added to this application. The new claims are supported in Table 2A (1-1 and 1-4) and by paragraphs [0117]-[0127] of the specification. No new matter has been added.

Claims 16-22 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kurokawa in view of Machida and Kasuya. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 16 and 22 claim an image forming apparatus that includes a toner containing an organic aromatic solvent and a vinyl monomer in combined concentrations of not more than 500ppm.

As described in paragraph [0019] of the application, the present invention provides a developing device “adapted to prevent the contact-charger member from suffering the deteriorated characteristics thereof due to contact with toner...” As stated in paragraph [0062] of the specification, the claimed toner with an organic aromatic solvent and a vinyl monomer in the combined concentration of not more than 500 ppm prevents deterioration of the member by inhibiting penetration of the toner into the contact-charger member.

The Examiner contends that it would be obvious to modify the device in Kurokawa to utilize the toner in Kasuya having an organic aromatic solvent and a vinyl monomer in combined concentration of not more than 1,000 ppm. The Examiner’s contention is incorrect. Like the present invention, Kurokawa states that it is an object of the invention to prevent deterioration of the charging member (Kurokawa, col. 3, II. 34-38). However, Kurokawa remedies this problem in a different manner than Applicants. Specifically, Kurokawa describes using epichlorohydrin rubber on the charging member to improve the voltage resistance of the charging member (Kurokawa, col. 7, II. 14-37).

Since Kurokawa remedies deterioration of the charging member without using the claimed toner, one would not be motivated to utilize the toner in Kasuya. For the foregoing reasons, the rejection of claims 16 and 22 should be withdrawn. The rejection of claims 17-21, which depend from claims 16 and 22, should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

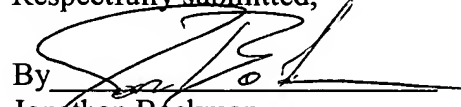
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to

withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 32577-2026410.

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Respectfully submitted,

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